Drowsy Driving

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that 100,000 crashes are a result of driver fatigue each year, resulting in over 1,500 deaths and 71,000 injuries. In Kentucky from 2005 to 2007, there were 5,374 crashes related to driver fatigue, resulting in 3,061 injuries and 91 fatalities.

Kentucky Safety Facts

Wake Up! Stay Alert At The Wheel

- Get plenty of sleep before starting a trip. Most adults need seven to nine hours to maintain proper alertness during the day.
- Arrange for a travel companion to talk with and share the driving.
- Avoid eating a heavy meal before driving, as it may induce drowsiness.
- Stop for a drink of caffeine.
- Apply cold water to eyelids, face and neck.
- Schedule breaks about every 100 miles or two hours during long trips.
- Stop at a safe place to stretch and take a three minute brisk walk or jog.
- Pull off the road and find a safe place, such as a rest area, to take a 15 to 20 minute nap.
- Stop driving! Pull off at the next exit or rest area to find a safe place to sleep for the night.
- Wear your seat belt! A properly worn seat belt reduces fatigue by supporting an upright position.

Does Caffeine Really Help?

Caffeine promotes short-term alertness and takes about 30 minutes to begin working. The equivalent of two cups of coffee can increase alertness for several hours. To get the maximum benefit, pull over for a caffeinated beverage, take a short nap, then get back on the road.

Did You Know?

Studies show that people who are awake 17 straight hours are as impaired as someone with a .05 Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC). Those awake 24 straight hours are as impaired as someone with a .10 BAC, which is over Kentucky's legal limit of .08 BAC.

Symptoms Of Fatigue

- Eyes burning, closing or going out of focus
- Wandering or disconnected thoughts
- Forgetting to turn off turn signal
- Unaware of passing vehicles
- Not able to remember last warning sign
- Irritable, exhausted, and giddiness

Effects Of Fatigue

- Reduced hand-eye coordination
- Slow reaction time and decreased energy
- Reduced accuracy
- Lapse of attention
- Diminished ability to see subtle changes
- Compromised decision making

Poor sleep can impair safety by reducing thinking ability, alertness, and task performance.

4 hours of sleep: 50% decrease **6 hours of sleep:** 25% decrease

8 hours of sleep: 0% decrease

Tips For Better Sleep

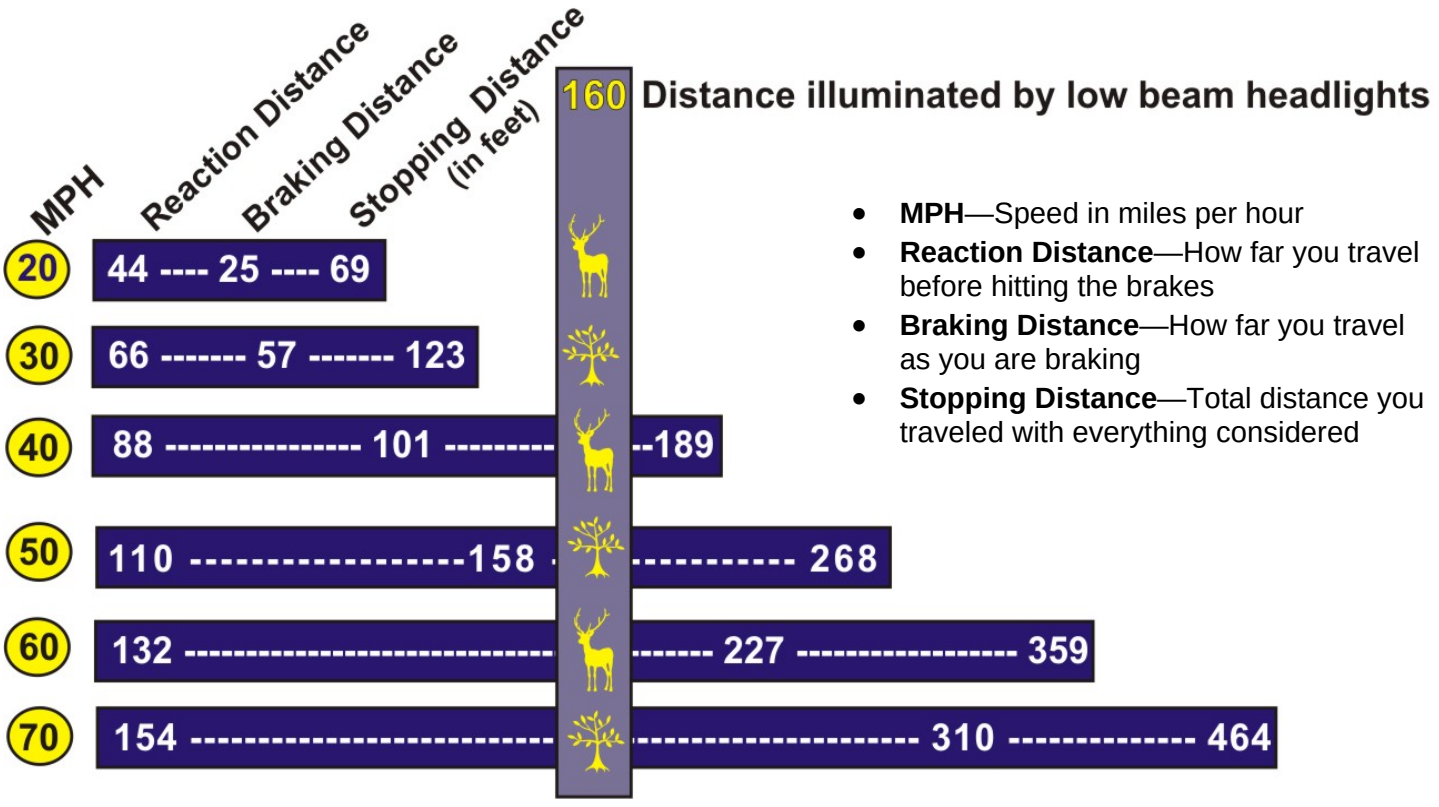
- ► Exercise regularly and do it at least three hours before bedtime.
- ► Eat regular, nutritious meals, but not a heavy meal at bedtime.
- ► Have a routine for going to bed and rising each day.
- ► Create a positive sleep environment. Lower your thermostat, make the bedroom dark, and block or mask outside sounds.
- ► Avoid tabacco, caffeine and alcohol several hours before bedtime.

Driving At Night Can Be Deadly

There are more reported crashes in the fall due to more hours of darkness. The faster you drive, the more time and distance you need to stop, and the less time you have to react. At night, when you can only see as far as your headlights allow, the situation is worse.

Headlights allow you to spot an object on the road about 160 feet ahead of your vehicle. Most drivers need approximately 1.5 seconds to react. At 60 mph, a vehicle travels 88 feet per second. If you are driving too fast, the consequences could be deadly!

Reaction Distance + Braking Distance = Stopping Distance



- **MPH**—Speed in miles per hour
- **Reaction Distance**—How far you travel before hitting the brakes
- **Braking Distance**—How far you travel as you are braking
- **Stopping Distance**—Total distance you traveled with everything considered

For Additional Information:

- **AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety:** www.aaafoundation.org
- **Kentucky Sleep Society:** http://www.kyss.org/default.asp?id=44
- **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:** www.nhtsa.dot.gov
- **Natioanl Center on Sleep Disorders Research:** www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/ncsdr/
- **St. Joseph Sleep Wellness Center:** www.sjhlex.org/body.cfm?oTopId=0&id=173

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
Kentucky Office of Highway Safety

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